



A Conservative History of the American Left

Daniel J. Flynn

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From Communes to the Clintons

Why does Hillary Clinton crusade for government-provided health care for every American, for the redistribution of wealth, and for child rearing to become a collective obligation? Why does Al Gore say that it's okay to "over-represent" the dangers of global warming in order to sell Americans on his draconian solutions? Why does Michael Moore call religion a device to manipulate "gullible" Americans?

Where did these radical ideas come from? And how did they enter the mainstream discourse?

In this groundbreaking and compelling new book, Daniel J. Flynn uncovers the surprising origins of today's Left. The first work of its kind, *A Conservative History of the American Left* tells the story of this remarkably resilient extreme movement—one that came to America's shores with the earliest settlers.

Flynn reveals a history that leftists themselves ignore, whitewash, or obscure. Partly the Left's amnesia is convenient: Who wouldn't want to forget an ugly history that includes eugenics, racism, violence, and sheer quackery? Partly it is self-aggrandizing: Bold schemes sound much more innovative when you refuse to acknowledge that they have been tried—and have failed—many times before. And partly it is unavoidable: The Left is so preoccupied with its triumphal future that it doesn't pause to learn from its past mistakes. So it goes that would-be revolutionaries have repeatedly failed to recognize the one troubling obstacle to their grandiose visions: reality.

In unfolding this history, Flynn presents a page-turning narrative filled with colorful, fascinating characters—progressives and populists, radicals and reformers, socialists and SDSers, and leftists of every other stripe. There is the rags-to-riches Welsh industrialist who brought his utopian vision to America—one in which private property, religion, and marriage represented "the most monstrous evils"—and gained audiences with the likes of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and James Madison. There is the wife-swapping Bible thumper who nominated Jesus Christ for president. There is the playboy adventurer whose worshipful accounts of Soviet Russia lured many American liberals to Communism. There is the daughter of privilege turned violent antiwar activist who lost her life to a bomb she had intended to use against American soldiers. There are fanatics and free spirits, perverts and puritans, entrepreneurs and altruists, and many more beyond.

A Conservative History of the American Left is a gripping chronicle of the radical visionaries who have relentlessly pursued their lofty ambitions to remake society. Ultimately, Flynn shows the destructiveness that comes from this undying pursuit of dreams that are utterly unattainable.

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